

"His car looked like a physician's and he went in with a case in his hand."

"Oh," said the young man with some feeling. "Then there must be something the matter."

"Did you suppose she was doing this for amusement?" asked his mother with some asperity.

"Well, no, of course not. But when I came past there the young lady was training up a vine and laughing and talking to the other woman, just as—well, as natural as any one."

"No doubt she has lucid intervals. Perhaps they hope for her recovery in time."

"I should think you'd get so curious you'd have to call," ventured the young man.

"Never! She might return it; and I shouldn't feel safe for a minute. Don't you, either, think of making a call, if you don't want me to pack up and go to town."

Ogden had to at once disclaim any intention of so doing. He liked the place and was looking forward to spending his vacation there.

The next week he came out to stay for awhile. In answer to his usual question as to the developments next door, his mother replied that it had been unusually quiet. Perhaps the patient had been taken away.

"Well, then she's back again, for I saw the young lady as I passed," he said.

"Perhaps, after all, she isn't the crazy one. They may," she added in a creepy, shuddery tone, "have some poor creature shut up there."

"I see it's up to me to fathom this mystery."

"I don't see anything of the kind," snapped his mother. "You let it alone."

That afternoon he took a little stroll down to a small stream near by to see if it promised anything in the way of boating or fishing. In a pretty, wooded spot, where the branches hung over the water, he

dropped ostensibly to watch for fish, but in reality to idle and dream. He saw a book lying in the grass a few feet away. He looked around for the owner. There was no one in sight. He listened, but there was no sound of human company; so, after waiting a few minutes, he reached for the book. It was Mrs. Browning's "Aurora Leigh," a book not much read these days, but a poem he greatly liked. He began to turn over the leaves and to read here and there bits that he loved. He saw that many lines were marked, lines that especially appealed to him. This led him to look for the name of the owner. He read on the flyleaf, "Grace Ansley."

"I wonder if that's our neighbor," he thought. "I've never heard her name. Well, I'm going to chance it."

He determined to return the book in person. The door was opened by the grim, elderly person. Yes, Miss Ansley lived there, but she could not disturb her just then. Kirk slightly objected to leaving the book if it did not belong to the lady, but she said it would be returned to him if it did not belong to Miss Ansley. She took his name and address and dismissed him. That evening the elderly lady called with a note which Mrs. Kirk took in. She handed it to her son and waited with frowning impatience for him to explain. In the note Miss Ansley presented her compliments and thanked Mr. Kirk for returning her book.

There was no way out of it for the young man but to tell the truth.

"There, you see," said his mother, "the old woman probably had her shut up for fear of a fit coming on. I hope now you're satisfied."

Ogden said nothing, but he was far from being satisfied. The next day he again strolled down by the river. Suddenly a voice called "Help!" He hurried to the spot and saw out in the stream a girl in a rowboat. She was very pretty and her face wore a look of comic distress.